



CECOM Science & Technology (S&T) Reinvention Lab

Issue 5

October 99

Message from the Director

As the time approaches for us to submit our plans for the Laboratory Personnel Demo to DoD for review before it goes to OPM for final approval, it is appropriate to review the reasons behind this process. I am a strong believer in the old adage: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it". Hence, we should have compelling reasons to go to the considerable effort (and cost) as well as emotional energy before making changes to the established routine.



The fact that the original Civil Service statutes, drafted at the turn of the century (100 years ago,) are not optimal for a technical work force was recognized over a decade ago by Congress when they authorized the "China Lake" Pilot Program. It must be recalled that then, and even more now, the very existence of a Civil Service Defense Laboratory (as opposed to contracted private sector labs, such as the DOE's Lawrence Livermore, Los Alamos, and Oak Ridge, as well as NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab) is under severe attack. Thus, we must first decide whether it is truly in the best interests of our soldiers (after all, our "bottom line") to maintain a Civil Service RDEC, or, as it has been strongly suggested by both the Defense Science Board as well as influential members of Congress, whether we should just "contract out" CECOM. We are particularly vulnerable to this inclination to "contract out" because our business area embodies all the "information technologies" which are recognized to be primarily driven by the commercial sector as we enter the "Information Age". By the way, our sister service labs, Rome, ESC, and SPAWAR share this role and this vulnerability. In fact, in response to the Defense Authorization Act of 1999, (Section 912), OSD is required to study the feasibility of merging all service activities in the IT area at a single location, with method of personnel TBD.

I believe very strongly that we must maintain a technically competent and competitive in-house Government Civil Service capability to objectively identify, evaluate, integrate, and transition emerging information technologies to our warfighters.

I have had the pleasure of working in many environments in my career, all with diverse cultures. These range from serving as a Signal Corps officer (albeit assigned to NASA with a culture of its own), an Assistant Professor of Physics at the University of Arizona (definitely a bizarre culture), technical staff and manager at an FFRDC (MIT Lincoln Laboratory), a private "beltway bandit" contractor (Nichols Research Corp), a Defense Agency manager (DARPA and SDIO), and an OSD staffer (developing the concept of ACTDs), and finally a manager here at the CECOM RDEC, including being previous Director of NV/ESD. I can honestly say that the quality and commitment of the people with whom I have collaborated here are the equal and in some respects the best of the lot and I am proud to be counted among you. The ultimate measure of an organization's culture is the "bottom line" and it is ONLY within the government civilian work force that the bottom line is truly in the best interest of our customer, the soldier. We are indeed faithful custodians of the public trust.

This being the case, why do we even consider making any changes to our personnel structure? What is broke that we must fix? I come back to our need to set the stage for a 21st Century information age technician, and emphasize the necessity for a superior, competitive technical workforce. This will require extensive training and retraining, incentives to both hire and retain personnel, attention to management, mentoring, and promotional opportunities to foster both our goals of diversity as well as true equal opportunity. We must overcome the obstacles which exist in our current personnel system, such as promotion freezes, limited award amounts, inflated TAPES ratings, virtually no differentiation in performance levels, limitations for high grades, and so forth. The many aspects of

PERSONNEL
DEMO

our proposed plan are intended to address these obstacles. The principal elements include the essential goal of "pay for performance" as well as "pay banding" to overcome grade level restrictions.

The Laboratory Personnel Demo is a (very moderate) step in the direction of personnel reform for government technical laboratories. Our proposed approach builds upon the lessons learned, starting at China Lake (where it is still in effect, now formalized and no longer a "pilot", for over 15 years), the experience at both ARL and AMCOM, where a demo has been in effect for over a year, and collaboration with TACOM, which is at the same introductory phase as CECOM. I recognize that there may be residual questions and concerns that each of you may have regarding how you would be affected personally. I remind you that we are in the preliminary phases and have the opportunity to fine tune to address any of your legitimate concerns. I will be holding Town Meetings at both Belvoir and Monmouth in the near future, and our Demo plans will be a major item up for discussion. In the meantime, I urge you to study the details of the plan, as summarized in previous newsletters and on the internet, and discuss the issues among yourselves. I strongly support the objectives of our Demo and am committed to bringing it into being. Its effectiveness and ultimate utility and success, measured against our ability to maintain a civilian workforce bar none, is up to us all.

- Dr. Louis C. Marquet

PERSONNEL DEMO

The Personnel Demo Newsletter is an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-81. It is published quarterly for employees of the CECOM Research, Development and Engineering Center, Software Engineering Center and the Information Systems Engineering Command, to create a better understanding of the S&T Personnel Demo. The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.
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About Change...

Clearly, the Personnel Demo project represents change. Are you in favor of change, see change as inevitable, or do you typically resist change? If you typically resist change, here are some of the most common reasons why:

Self-Interest – Where someone achieves status, privilege or self-esteem through the effective use of the old system, they often see a new plan as a threat.

Fear of the Unknown – People may be uncertain of their abilities to adapt to the new system, or their ability to take on new roles.

Conscientious Objection or Differing Perceptions – People may sincerely believe that the change is wrong. They may view the situation from a different viewpoint. People in different jobs will have different perceptions of a situation. From the employee's perspective: "Seems like I no sooner get comfortable with my job and WHAM! - a whole new set of expectations are dropped on me." From the manager's perspective: "Like you, I have a comfort zone that gives me peace. And just like you, my cage gets rattled when I have to change my habits by doing new and different things."

Suspicion – A lack of trust

Conservatism – Organizations or people may simply be opposed to change. This can result from a feeling that everything is OK, so why change it.

About Skepticism...

Sometimes it's just plain hard not to be skeptical. But, while skepticism may be somewhat natural, it can also be counterproductive.

There are two problems inherent in skepticism. First, it fosters no-win environments. If people don't walk the talk, they get criticized. If they make an effort to change – if they try to walk the talk – they face skepticism and disbelief. Eventually, realizing that you can't win no matter what you do, you stop trying altogether. As a result nothing changes...nothing gets better.

The second problem with skepticism is that it's based on the belief that the skeptic bears no responsibility for what's happening. No one is skeptical of themselves – it's always "the other guy," Either we're part of the solution or we're part of the problem; either we're making things better or we're making them worse (or allowing them to get worse by doing nothing).

(An extract from "Sharing the Responsibilities for Bringing Values to Life", by Eric Harvey and Alexander Lucia)

Progress Report

- April through July - Focus Group Briefings on the Demo Project were held at RDEC, SEC and ISEC activities at Fort Monmouth, Fort Belvoir and Fort Dietrick
- August - Focus Group Briefings on the Demo Project were held for ISEC employees at Fort Huachuca
- September - The Department of Army (DA) General Counsel is reviewing our Demo Project plan. We expect it will be forwarded on to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) for their review by the end of the month. A copy of this plan, dated June 18, 1999 is available at www.monmouth.army.mil/cecom/rdec/PersDemo/main.htm under the heading PLANS

What's Next In the Process?

- Following OSD approval, the plan advances to the Office of Personnel Management. When all of their concerns and questions have been addressed and incorporated into the plan, the Director of OPM approves and signs the plan for publication. The plan is published as a *Federal Register* notice. This is the first of two *Federal Register* publications

- Within 30 days after publication of the first Federal Register notice, OPM will facilitate public hearings. A public hearing is an opportunity for employees and the public to be heard. Comments and questions are acknowledged and clarified. It is not a debate, nor a question and answer session. It is focused on obtaining input. It is also during this period that formal negotiations will be held with local Unions representing RDEC, SEC and ISEC employees
- All comments must be summarized and addressed in the second and final Federal Register notice
- A minimum of 90 days after publication of the final Federal Register notice is required before a demonstration project can be implemented. Additionally, all aspects of the Demo project must be fully negotiated with the Unions prior to implementation

Upcoming Events

Town Meetings - Dr. Marquet will address the RDEC workforce. Among the topics: "The Personnel Demo Project"

Dates and locations as follows:

October 12th - Myer Center Auditorium
Fort Monmouth, NJ

October 13th - Essayons Auditorium
Fort Belvoir, VA

October 19th - Myer Center Auditorium
Fort Monmouth, NJ

**"You've only failed,
if you've failed to try".**

- Author Unknown

**"Learn to see things as
they really are, not as
We imagine they are."**

- Vernon Howard

SCRAMBLE

Unscramble these six words, one letter to each square, to form six ordinary words.

V R E E I V

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

K A W N E A

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Y W R D O S

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N I S E A R

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E P S A L E

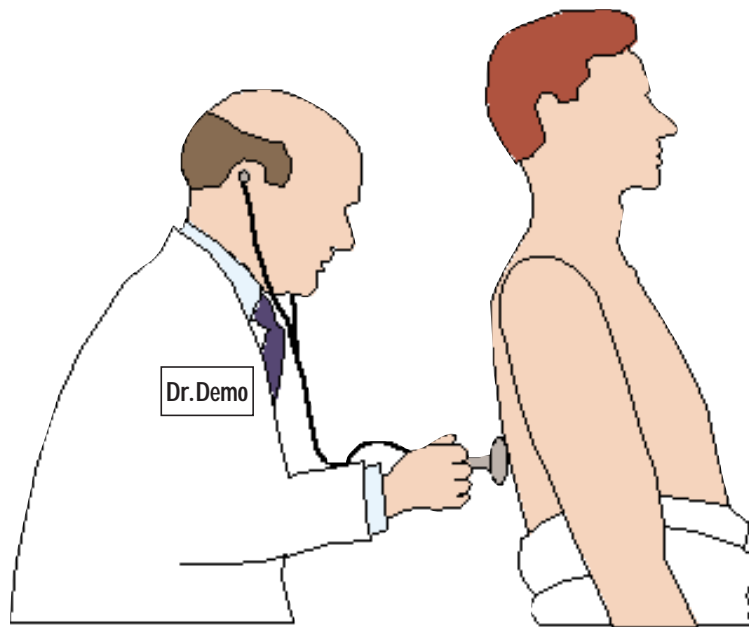
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L A Y B U L L

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

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Cough!!

How the Personnel Demo felt after a quick checkup?

ANSWER TO SCRAMBLE ON LAST PAGE

• In Africa - - -

-- every morning a gazelle awakens knowing that it must outrun the fastest lion if it wants to stay alive.

Every morning a lion wakes up knowing that it must run faster than the slowest gazelle or it will starve to death.

It makes no difference whether you are a lion or a gazelle: When the sun comes up - - you had better be running.

Gen Reimer, CSA, 98

Why Learn About the Demo? Or How to Get Something New to Gripe About!

By Mike Gruen

I was asked to write an article that would inspire the workforce into learning more about PD – that's Personnel Demonstration, not to be confused with a couple of things just as scary with similar initials. I admit, I don't know everything I should about it. What would inspire me to learn more about it? I thought about a logo. We've got one that's it in the upper left corner of the first page. How about coffee mugs? If there's a mug, it's got to happen. But that wouldn't inspire a non-coffee drinker like me. It wouldn't get in my face a couple of times a day.

So what do I say about something that impacts everyone more than the next round of health insurance increases? Everyone's more interested in that than PD. Maybe I need to get PD covered under FEHB and set up a booth at the health fair. But some people may be too embarrassed to talk about PD. That won't work.

I could talk about the Command's 1.5% performance awards policy and how it equates to about .975% after taxes. That's about \$1.33 a day on a salary of \$50,000, or a juice and bagel in the morning. With PD, I could get more if I earn it and maybe get two bagels in the morning. Of course, I may not get a bonus under PD (or the current system) and miss out on the snack. Actually, I should miss out; I just looked into the mirror.

So what's my beef about PD? That's it! I don't know enough about it so I can gripe about it with my colleagues. I'm too comfortable and don't want to change. I can talk GS and step and everyone understands me. I can complain about the current system and everyone agrees with me. It's familiar and not scary like PD. But sticking with the GS system won't pay me what I'm worth. I'm worth at least a Big Breakfast plus a super sized fry at lunch. All sticking with the current system gives me is the same old thing, nothing new, and nothing to look forward to. Just whatever Congress wants to give me and a bagel. That's good enough for some people, but not for me. Maybe the PD isn't the answer, but I won't just say no to PD without learning more about it. I want that Big Breakfast and fries. Anyone else hungry right now?

Beta/Tapes Comparisons How Would You Fare?

The CECOM S&T Laboratory Demonstration Beta Test was conducted in the Fall of 1998. Employees in the test group were GS-12's and above from the RDEC, SEC and ISSC. The overall test group consisted of **257 Engineers and Scientists and 66 Business and Technical** for a total of **323** employees distributed in these pay pools:

East Pay Pool	1 GS-15
	16 GS-14
	113 GS-13
	42 GS-12
	172

West Pay Pool	0 GS-15
	14 GS-14
	79 GS-13
	28 GS-12
	121

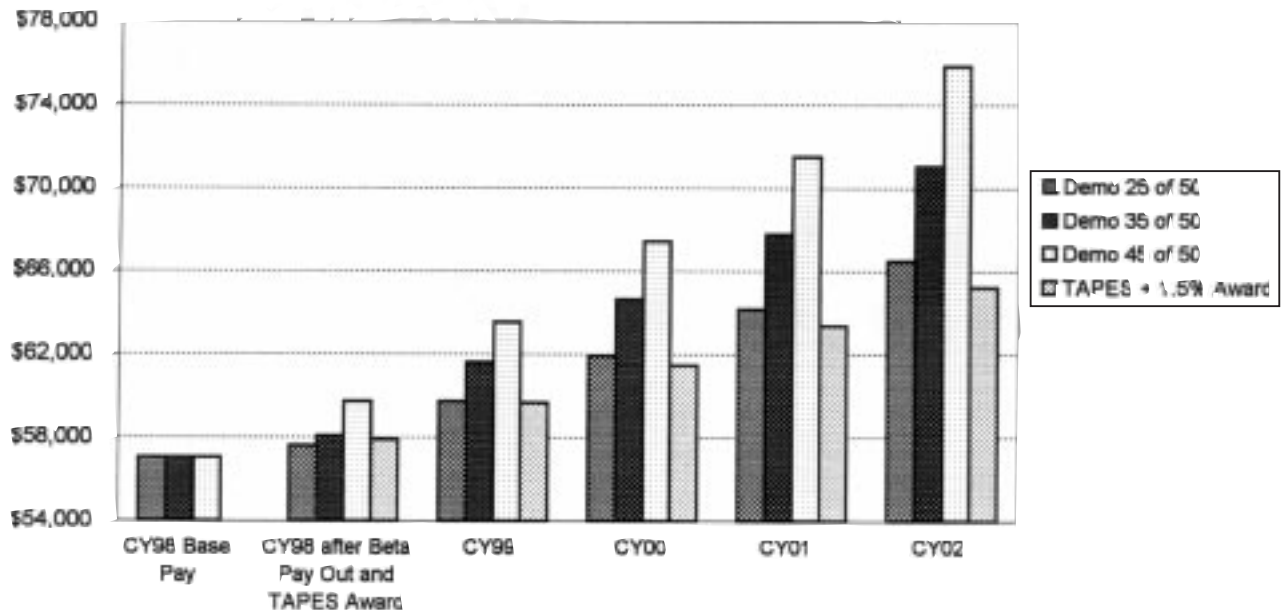
Supervisory Pay Pool	1 GS-15
	24 GS-14
	5 GS-13
	30

Using share values from the East pay pool, five-year pay progressions were projected for a GS-12/10, a GS-13/10 and a GS-14/10. For the sake of comparison, a five-year TAPES salary projection was also done for the same three grades. The assumptions were:

- A 3.0% General Increase every year after CY99
- The TAPES salary was projected with a 3% General Increase plus 1.5% in awards
- Demo projections were done using the following appraisal scores:
 - 25 of 50, or 0.50 shares
 - 35 of 50, or 1.50 shares
 - 45 of 50, or 2.50 shares
 (Maximum score=50, Maximum shares=3)
- Appraisal scores were the same every year

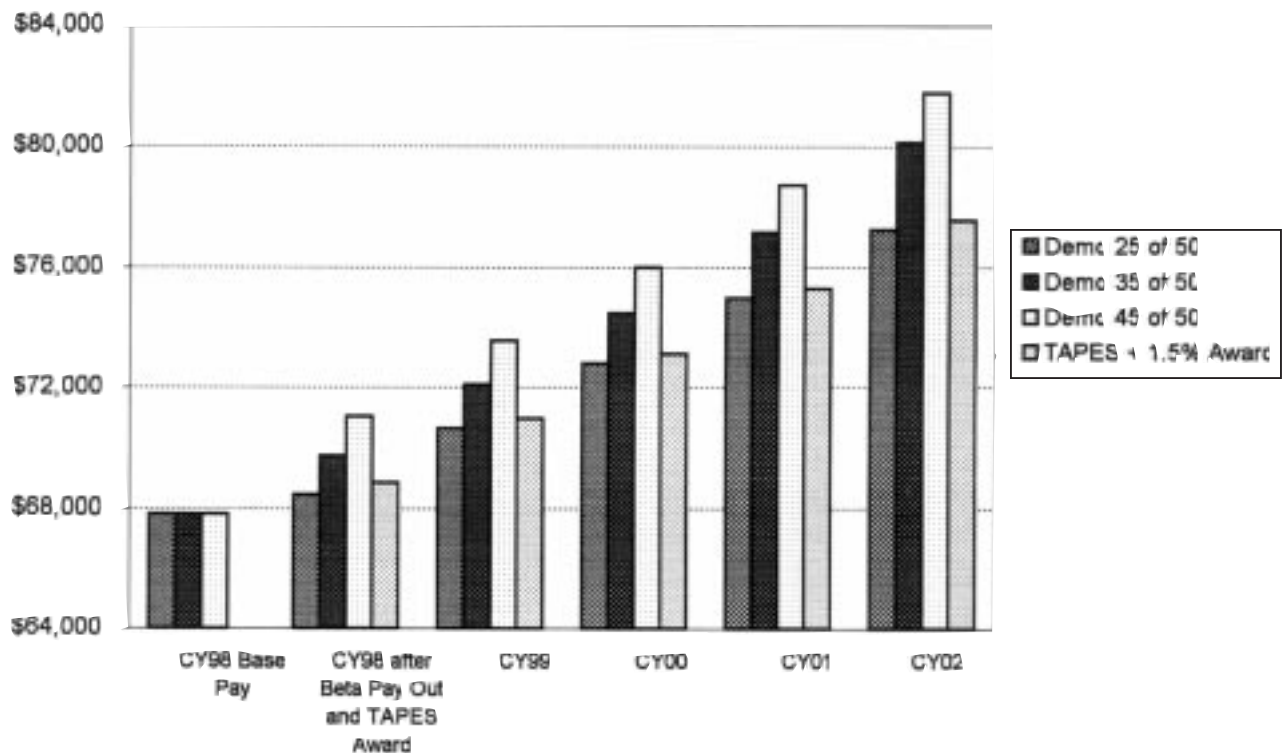
GS-12 Step 10

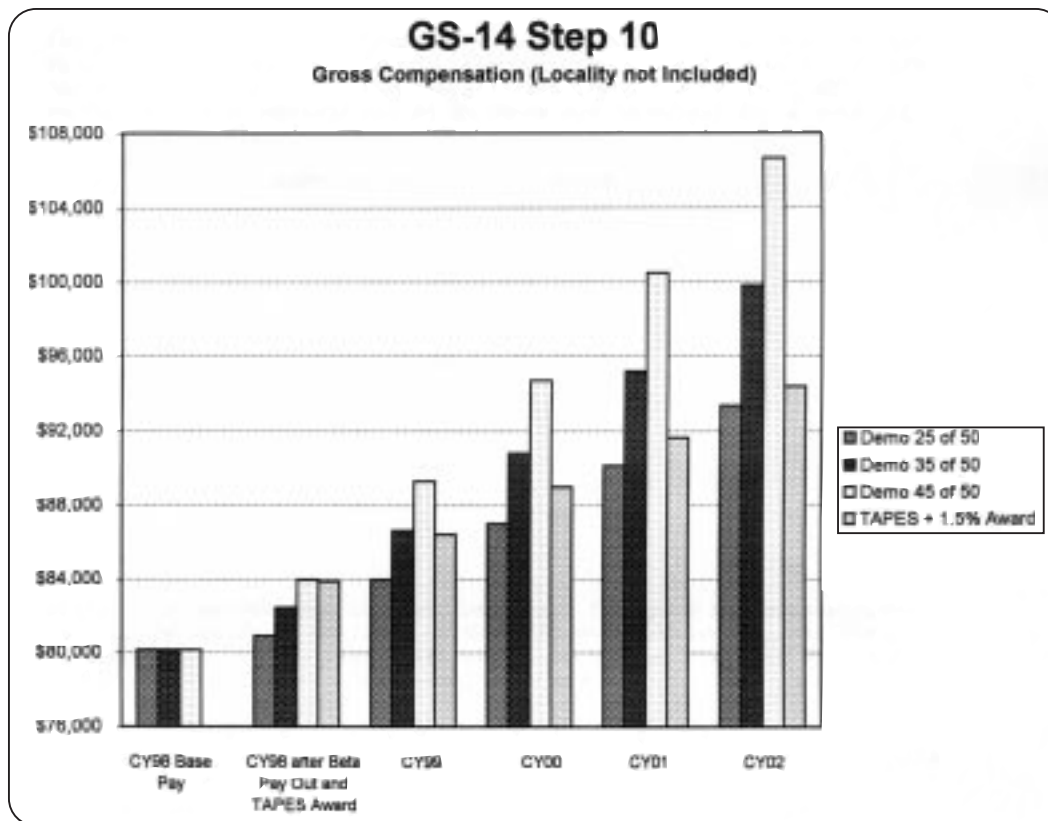
Gross Compensation (Locality not Included)



GS-13 Step 10

Gross Compensation (Locality not Included)





FYI

We've often been asked how the concepts of Pay for Performance and Pay Banding compare with the compensation practices of private industry?

The management-consulting firm of Hewitt Associates reports that Pay for Performance has been the growing trend among companies for years. In an article from the Sunday edition of the *Asbury Park Press*, September 26, 1999 they reported that 70% of the companies surveyed offer at least one variable pay plan (where you earn your increase by your better than average performance). That's up from just 47% in 1980.

The concept of paybanding has also gained increased popularity according to a study done by Hewitt Associates. "Major corporations are turning to paybanding to simplify compensation and facilitate internal job transfers and lateral mobility." This was reported in a Management Report, "Broad-Banding in the Federal Government," U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Feb 1993.

ANSWERS TO SCRAMBLE
Revive, Awaken, Drowsy. Arisen, Asleep, Lullaby.

Final: Alive and Well